

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated hereafter (where underlining “_” denotes additions and strikethrough “-” denotes deletions).

Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing a system for automatically checking for an incorrect e-mail address in an outgoing e-mail communication, comprising:

creating an incoming domain name list ~~of domain names~~ in a memory;

receiving an incoming email communication;

extracting a domain name from a sender's email address from the incoming email communication;

storing the domain name in the incoming domain name list ~~of domain names~~ in the memory;

checking if a domain name of an e-mail address associated with an intended recipient of an outgoing e-mail communication is included in the incoming domain name list ~~of domain names~~ in the memory; and

transmitting the outgoing email communication if the domain name is included in the incoming domain name list, or otherwise generating a prompt for a user to confirm an e-mail address associated with the intended recipient of the outgoing e-mail communication ~~if the domain name is not included in the list of domain names.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The method of checking for an incorrect e-mail address according to claim 1, further comprising the step of extracting a domain name from each e-mail address provided in the outgoing e-mail communication, wherein the e-mail communication is transmitted after checking each extracted domain name in the incoming domain name list ~~of domain names~~, and confirming each e-mail address for which the extracted domain name is not included in the incoming domain name list ~~of domain names~~.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Currently Amended) The method of checking for an incorrect e-mail address according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of receiving a corrected e-mail address from the user in response to the prompt; and repeating the steps of checking a corrected domain name and generating a prompt if the corrected domain name is not included in the incoming domain name list ~~of domain names~~, until the user either confirms that the domain name provided in the e-mail address is correct or provides a domain name that is in the list of domain names.

5. (Original) The method of checking for an incorrect e-mail address according to claim 1, wherein the outgoing e-mail communication is intercepted in an e-mail server to check the domain name in the e-mail address prior to transmission.

6. (Original) The method of checking for an incorrect e-mail address according to claim 5, wherein the prompt is an e-mail message from the e-mail server to the user.

7. (Original) The method of checking for an incorrect e-mail address according to claim 5, wherein the prompt is a network message to the user.

8. (Previously Presented) A method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications prior to transmission by an e-mail communications server, comprising:

- receiving email communications incoming to the email communications server;
- creating a domain name database;
- extracting domain names in senders' e-mail addresses from the e-mail communications incoming to the email communications server;
- storing extracted domain names in the domain name database;
- receiving outgoing e-mail communications from client computers connected to the e-mail communications server through a local network;

searching the domain name database for domain names spelled similarly to the domain names in e-mail addresses associated with intended recipients of the outgoing e-mail communication provided in the outgoing e-mail communications; and

generating an error prompt upon detecting that a domain name in an e-mail address provided in an outgoing e-mail communication is misspelled.

9. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 8, wherein the step of searching for similarly spelled domain names is performed by checking each alphanumeric character comprised in the extracted domain name with the alpha-numeric characters comprised in the domain names in the database, and detecting when there is at least one but no more than a maximum number of discrepancies between a domain name in the domain name database and the extracted domain name.

10. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 8, wherein the step of searching for similarly spelled domain names is performed by removing an alpha-numeric character from the extracted domain name and searching the domain name database for a domain name consisting of at least each of the remaining alphanumeric characters in the extracted domain name.

11. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 8, wherein the step of searching for similarly spelled domain names is performed by comparing the extracted domain name with reference domain names stored in the domain name database according to predetermined spelling grammar algorithms.

12. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 8, wherein the error prompt is an e-mail message from the e-mail server to the client computer transmitting the e-mail communication.

13. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 8, wherein the error prompt is a network message from the e-mail server to the client computer transmitting the e-mail communication.

14. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 8, further comprising the step of determining whether extracted domain names are already stored in the domain name database, whereby only a single copy of an extracted domain name is stored in the domain name database.

15. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 14, further comprising the step of storing tally information in the domain name database to tally the frequency in which domain names in the domain name database are extracted from incoming e-mail communications.

16. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 15, further comprising the step of deleting domain names from the domain name database that are not frequently extracted from incoming e-mail communications according to respective tally information.

17. (Original) The method of automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 16, wherein the tally information for each domain name in the domain name database includes the calendar date in which the domain name was most recently extracted.

18. (Previously Presented) An e-mail server for automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications prior to transmission by an e-mail communications server, comprising:

an interceptor for extracting domain names from e-mail addresses provided in incoming and outgoing e-mail communications;

a database generator for generating a domain name database for storing domain names extracted from senders' e-mail addresses in incoming e-mail communications; and

a checker for searching the domain name database for domain names spelled similarly to the domain names in e-mail addresses associated with intended recipients of in the outgoing e-mail communications,

wherein the e-mail server detects misspelled domain names in e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications.

19. (Previously Presented) The e-mail server for automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 18, further comprising:

an internal network communications interface for receiving outgoing e-mail communications to be transmitted from client computers and sending incoming e-mail communications to client computers,

wherein the e-mail checker generates an error prompt when detecting a misspelled domain name, which is transmitted from the internal network communications interface to the client computer requesting transmission of the corresponding outgoing e-mail communication.

20. (Previously Presented) The e-mail server for automatically checking for misspelled e-mail addresses in outgoing e-mail communications according to claim 19, further comprising:

an external network communications interface for receiving incoming e-mail communications from an external network and sending outgoing e-mail communications transmitted from client computer connected to the internal network,

wherein outgoing e-mail communications are transmitted from the external network communications interface to the external network after the checker confirms e-mail address spelling in the outgoing e-mail communications.

21. (Currently Amended) A method of automatically checking for an incorrect e-mail address in an outgoing e-mail communication, comprising:

creating an incoming email address list ~~of email addresses~~ in a memory;

receiving an incoming email communication;

storing, in the incoming email address list ~~of e-mail addresses~~ in the memory, an email address extracted from the incoming email communication;

checking if an e-mail address associated with an intended recipient of the outgoing e-mail communication is included in the incoming email address list ~~of e-mail addresses~~ in the memory; and

transmitting the outgoing email communication if the e-mail address is included in the incoming email address list, or otherwise generating a prompt for a user to confirm an e-mail address if the domain name is not included in the incoming email address list ~~of e-mail addresses~~.

22. (Canceled).

23. (Original) The method of automatically checking for an incorrect e-mail address in an outgoing e-mail communication according to claim 22, further comprising the step of storing tally information in the memory to tally the frequency by which the e-mail addresses are extracted from incoming e-mail communications.

24. (Original) The method of automatically checking for an incorrect e-mail address in an outgoing e-mail communication according to claim 23, further comprising the step of deleting e-mail addresses from the memory that are not frequently extracted from incoming e-mail communications according to respective tally information.

25. (Original) The method of automatically checking for an incorrect e-mail address in an outgoing e-mail communication according to claim 21, wherein the memory is in an e-mail address directory in a client computer system.

26. (Currently Amended) An e-mail communications system stored in a client computer for automatically checking for incorrect e-mail addresses provided in outgoing e-mail communications from the client computer prior to transmission to an e-mail server, comprising:

an address extractor for extracting senders' e-mail addresses from incoming e-mail communications;

a memory for storing e-mail addresses extracted from senders' e-mail addresses in incoming e-mail communications; and

a checker for searching the memory for e-mail addresses associated with intended recipients of the that are provided in outgoing e-mail communications,

wherein the checker generates a prompt for verification of the e-mail address upon detecting that an e-mail address in an outgoing e-mail communication is not present in the memory.

27. (Original) The e-mail communications system stored in a client computer for automatically checking for incorrect e-mail addresses according to claim 26, wherein the memory is included in an e-mail address directory.

28. (Original) The e-mail communications system stored in a client computer for automatically checking for incorrect e-mail addresses according to claim 27, wherein the e-mail address directory additionally stores user-specified e-mail addresses.